



Education Watch

Enhancing Flexibility & Accountability ■ Leaving No Child Behind

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Report Cards in H.R. 1 Hold Schools Accountable to Parents

One of the surest ways to hold schools accountable is to help parents stay informed -- to provide them the data they need to judge precisely how well schools are doing their job.

Consequently, H.R. 1 requires school districts to annually report to the public on the academic performance of each school in their jurisdictions -- because parents have a right to know whether their children are truly learning, that their children are being taught by a qualified teacher.

Reports cards will help parents judge how their local schools stack up against others in the state on the school's academic achievement, teacher qualifications, completion and passage rates, and graduation rates. In addition to requiring school districts to provide report cards, President Bush's plan calls on states to do the same.

State and school district report cards bolster the Bush plan's approach to accountability: States will oversee the progress of local school districts, and local schools will be held accountable to parents.

Washington has spent nearly \$130 billion since 1965 -- and more than \$80 billion in the past decade alone -- in an unsuccessful effort to close the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers. How much longer will Washington spend education dollars without insisting on results, without putting parents in charge?

Message of the Day

In the hands of caring parents, information can be a powerful catalyst for change in public schools.

- ❑ *Annual state assessments as well as state and school district report cards will enable schools to detect and correct problems on a timely basis.*
- ❑ *Report cards shine the spotlight on the quality of all schools in the state.*
- ❑ *They enhance parents' ability to make informed choices about their children's education, and enable citizens to help push for change in low performing schools.*

DAILY EDUCATION FACTS

- H.R. 1 requires states and local school districts to provide "report cards" to the public about how well schools are educating our children.
- Under the Bush plan, parents will be able to find out how their kids' academic performance compares to those in schools within their district as well as across the state as a whole.
- *No Child Left Behind* does not pursue accountability through national testing; rather, the Bush plan relies on states and local schools to design their own annual tests.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I can tell you from my own experience that there is simply no substitute for annual information on how well students and schools are performing." Education Secretary Rod Paige, March 13, testimony before House Budget Committee